

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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S E C R E T TAIPEI 3935

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, TW
SUBJECT: REACTION TO SECRETARY'S SPEECH ON EAST ASIA

1. PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH PROFESSOR ROBERT SCALAPINO TODAY PROVIDED ME WITH EARLY READING ON GROC REACTION TO SECRETARY VANCE'S SPEECH ON EAST ASIA JULY 29. FROM ALL PAST EXPERIENCE I WOULD TAKE SCALAPINO'S ACCOUNT TO BE CAREFUL AND ACCURATE.

2. LAST NIGHT AT DINNER GIVEN BY FRED CH'IEN, ONLY CHOU SHU-K'AI AND PREMIER'S SECRETARY JAMES SOONG (FORMER SCALAPINO PUPIL) WERE PRESENT. ATMOSPHERE WAS ONE OF DISTRESS AND GLOOM AND HE SAID CH'IEN, WHO SPOKE LESS THAN USUAL, APPEARED TO BE IN SOMETHING LIKE STATE OF SHOCK.

3. CHOU SHU-K'AI PROFESSED TO BE STUNNED AND BAFFLED BY THE TREATMENT OF THE CHINA QUESTION AND TOTAL ABSENCE OF MENTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA OR ITS RELATIONS WITH THE US. HE PROFESSED TO FEEL THAT TREATMENT OF HIS COUNTRY REPRESENTED BY THE SPEECH WAS SEVERE SHOCK AND SURPRISE TO HIM AND RAISED SERIOUS APPREHENSIONS ABOUT HOW US WOULD PURSUE NORMALIZATION.

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4. THIS MORNING SCALAPINO HAD BREAKFAST WITH GENERAL WANG SHENG, DIRECTOR, GENERAL POLITICAL WARFARE DEPARTMENT, MND, WHO WAS QUITE ANGRY. WANG PROFESSED TO FEEL THAT TRUST IN AND FRIENDSHIP WITH AMERICANS NOW GRAVELY JEOPARDIZED AND POLICY OF WORKING CLOSELY WITH US WILL BE CALLED INTO QUESTION.

5. LATER THIS MORNING, SCALAPINO HAD OVER HOUR WITH PREMIER CHIANG WHO WAS MUCH MORE CALM AND MEASURED BUT, SCALAPINO FELT, EVIDENTLY DISTRESSED. CHIANG SPOKE ABOUT US MISTAKEN JUDGMENT CONCERNING LIKELY PRC ACTIONS, INCLUDING HIS JUDGMENT EARLIER EXPRESSED THAT PRC IN FACT LIKELY SOONER OR LATER TO RESOT TO MILITARY ACTION AGAINST TAIWAN. AS CONVERSATION PROGRESSSED HE TOOK MORE PESSIMISTIC TONE, SUGGESTING INTER ALIA THE POSSIBILITY THAT REACTION HERE MIGHT MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO KEEP MATTERS UNDER UNDER CONTROL AND PURSUE POLICY OF CLOSE COOPERATION WITH US WHICH HE STRONGLY BELIEVES IN.

6. QUITE PREDICTABLE THAT THESE EXPERT BARBARIAN HANDLERS WOULD EACH SEEK TO CONVEY TO SCALAPINO, FOR HIM TO CONVEY TO US AMONG OTHERS, THEIR VERY NEGATIVE REACTION TO SHARPEST INDICATION YET OF WHAT THEY SEE TO BE OUR INCREASINGLY FIRM INTENTION TO PROCEED WITH NORMALIZATION. HOWEVER THEIR REACTION, I BELIEVE, ALSO LARGELY GENUINE AND IN KEEPING WITH CHARACTERIZATION OF SPEECH AS "BRUTAL" FROM ROC POINT OF VIEW, WHICH WE HAD HEARD FROM VARIOUS SOURCES.

7. COMMENT: I VERY MUCH REGRET THAT SPEECH IN ITS FINAL FORM FAILED TO CONTAIN FEW BUT ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS, PARTICULARLY FAVORABLE REFERENCE TO ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE, WHICH
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SAVED IT FROM THE STARK REJECTION OF THE EXISTENCE OF HE ROC WHICH IS IMPRESSION WHICH FINAL VERSION CONVEYS. MY CONCERN IS THAT REALISTIC AND REASONABLE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE SEEN IT AS BEING IN THEIR BEST INTERESTS AND BEST INTERESTS OF THEIR COUNTRY TO COOPERATE CLOSELY WITH US EVEN THROUGH THE AGONIZING STEPS OF NORMALIZATION, MAY POSSIBLY BEGIN TO REASSESS THEIR POSITION OR MAY ENCOUNTER SUCH OPPOSITION FROM MORE EXTREME ELEMENTS THAT THEY WILL BE PUSHED TOWARD POLICIES AND ACTIONS INIMICAL TO US INTERESTS. IT IS TOO EARLY TO CONCLUDE THAT THIS WILL TAKE PLACE AND EVEN FEW COMMENTS BY PRESIDENT IN HIS MOST RECENT PRESS CONFERENCE AS WELL AS SOME OF HOLBROOKE'S DISCUSSION WITH THE PRESS MAY HAVE BEEN HELPFUL.

8. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH PASS TO CINCPAC FOR POLAD.
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